

Message Text

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TAGS: OVIP (KISSINGER, HENRY A.), SOPN, XF

SUBJECT: COMBINED MEDIA REPORT, MARCH 22

FOR AMBASSADOR ANDERSON FROM S/PRS

NO. 42

WIRES:

1. AP -- MORNING LEAD SCHWEID FROM JERUSALEM, SAYS "BASIC PROBLEMS' WERE LEFT UNSETTLED AFTER HAK MET WITH ISRAELI NEGOTIATORS. PERES ASKED FOR PATIENCE AFTER 5 1/2 HOUR CABINET MEETING AND SUBSEQUENT TALKS WITH HAK. KEY ISSUE LEFT APPEARS TO BE DEPTH OF ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL, AND WHETHER PASSES AND OIL FIELDS WOULD BE INCLUDED. HAK PLANNED SIGHTSEEING AT MASADA, SAYING SHUTTLE WILL CONTINUE "AS LONG AS THERE IS A POSSIBILITY OF BRIDGING A GAP BETWEEN THE TWO SIDES." PERES DENIED RUMORS OF MILITARY CALLUP. DAYAN CITED IN JERUSALEM POST THAT TWO SIDES CLOSER THAN EVER BEFORE. FAHMY QUOTED IN ASWAN LAYING RESPONSIBILITY FOR FAILURE OF TALKS TO ISRAEL, SAYING "EGYPT IS DOING ITS BEST."

2. UPI -- FROM JERUSALEM SAYS HAK TRIED TO SPEED UP NEGO-

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TIATIONS, MEETING WITH RABIN LATE FRIDAY NIGHT TO DISCUSS

POSSIBLE PLEDGES FROM CAIRO. HAK WILL CONTACT ASWAN THROUGH DIPLOMATIC CHANNELS WHILE STAYING IN ISRAEL TODAY, TO RELAY

ISRAELI QUESTIONS ON PLEDGE POSSIBILITIES. SATURDAY NIGHT HAK WILL MEET WITH NEGOTIATORS BEFORE 5TH AND POSSIBLY DECISIVE SHUTTLE TO ASWAN. TALKS NOW BORDERING ON DEAD-LOCK. FAHMY IN ASWAN CITED AS ABOVE. ARAFAT IN DAMASCUS SAID PROPOSED UNION OF SYRIA AND PLO DESIGNED TO FOIL HAK.

RADIO:

MARVIN KALB, CBS RADIO ("FIRST-LINE REPORT") -- AFTER SUMMARY OF PARIS AGREEMENT AND NEW COMMUNIST OFFENSIVE, KALB DISCUSSES A PARALLEL: "... APPARENTLY HANOI REACHED A DECISION TO GO FOR BROKE ON THE ASSUMPTION THAT IT COULD DO SO ON THE CHEAP. IT LOOKS AS THOUGH THAT ASSUMPTION WAS VALID. . . KISSINGER SEEMS AMAZED THAT IT HASN'T COLLAPSED ALREADY. THE COMMUNIST DRIVE HAPPENS TO COINCIDE IN A VERY IRONIC WAY WITH KISSINGER'S SHUTTLE NEGOTIATION AIMED AT ACIEVING A SINAI AGREEMENT BETWEEN EGYPT AND ISRAEL. KISSINGER SUSPECTS THAT THE EVENTS IN INDOCHINA WILL CAST A LONG, NEGATIVE SHADOW OVER THE MIDDLE EAST, COMPLICATING HIS EFFORTS IN AT LEAST TWO WAYS. ON THE ISRAELI SIDE THERE ARE QUESTIONS NOW ABOUT THE DURABILITY OF AMERICAN COMMITMENTS. IF, FOR EXAMPLE, THE SINAI AGREEMENT IS BASED ON A PRIVATE AMERICAN ASSURANCE ONE SIDE TO THE OTHER THAT THE AGREEMENT WILL BE KEPT, HOW CAN ISRAEL BANK ON THAT AMERICAN ASSURANCE? OR PUT ANOTHER WAY, WHY SHOULD SHE? ON THE ARAB SIDE THERE IS A GROWTH OF SELF-CONFIDENCE BORN OF THE NOTION THAT IF THE U.S. COULD TIRE OF SUPPORTING CAMBODIA AND SOUTH VIET-NAM, SHE MIGHT ALSO TIRE OF SUPPORTING ISRAEL -- PERHAPS NOT IMMEDIATELY BUT SOONER THAN LATER. THEREFORE, WHY MAKE CONCESSIONS FOR A DEAL? IN A SHORT TIME ISRAEL WILL COLLAPSE WHEN DEPRIVED OF AMERICAN SUPPORT AND ARMS. ON BOTH SIDES OF THIS ARGUMENT THERE IS OBVIOUS EXAGGERATION: ISRAEL IS NOT CAMBODIA, CONGRESS HAS A DIFFERENT FEELING FOR ISRAEL THAN SHE HAS FOR INDOCHINA, AND ISRAEL IS NOT ASSOCIATED IN THE AMERICAN MIND WITH THE SPENDING AND WASTING OF BILLIONS IN AMERICAN TREASURE AND HUNDREDS AND UNCLASSIFIED

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THOUSANDS IN AMERICAN LIVES. BUT THESE LOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS TO ONE SIDE, THE INDOCHINA PARALLEL HAUNTS EVERYONE IN THIS NEGOTIATION. IT DOES NOT MEAN THERE CAN BE NO AGREEMENT BECAUSE OF INDOCHINA; IT DOES MEAN IT MAKES EVERYTHING MUCH MORE COMPLICATED AND EVERYTHING IS COMPLICATED ENOUGH WITHOUT INDOCHINA THROWING DUST IN EVERYONE'S EYES."

NEWSPAPERS (ONLY NYTIMES, WASHPOST AND BALTSUM AVAIL-

ABLE):

1. NYTIMES: GWERTZMAN ON FRONT PAGE SAYS TALKS FOCUS ON HOW MUCH TERRITORY TO BE RETURNED IN EXCHANGE FOR EGYPTIAN ASSURANCES THAT FALL SHORT OF ORIGINAL ISRAEL DEMAND. ASSURANCES THAT FALL SHORT OF ORIGINAL ISRAEL DEMAND. NEWSMEN ON PLANE WERE TOLD THAT SADAT MADE CONCESSIONS BUT APPARENTLY REJECTED SMALLER WITHDRAWAL THAN ASKED FOR. HAK BELIEVES NEXT THREE DAYS DECISIVE; NEWSMEN TOLD THAT ACCORD OR FAILURE COULD COME SOON. VARIOUS PARTS OF AGREEMENT AT OR NEAR TENTATIVE UNDERSTANDING, BUT PASSES AND OIL FIELDS IN EXCHANGE FOR NONBELLIGERENCY REMAINS UNRESOLVED. SADAT OFFERED SMALLER PLEDGE, ISRAEL OFFERED SMALLER WITHDRAWAL. SADAT NEEDS PASSES TO JUSTIFY TALKING WITH ISRAEL ALONE. NEWSMEN TOLD OF DEVELOPMENTS IN LAST TWO WEEKS: (A) DECLARATION RENOUNCING FORCE TO BE MADE PUBLIC; (B) FREED TERRITORY TO BE DEMILITARIZED AND MANNED BY UN FORCES; (C) UN FORCE WOULD HAVE MANDATE LONGER THAN SIX MONTHS, BUT FINITE; (D) ACCORD TO BE CARRIED OUT IN PHASES LASTING SEVERAL MONTHS, WITH DETAILS TO BE ARRANGED AFTER AGREEMENT; (E) THE AGREEMENT WOULD STAND ON ITS OWN, NOT DEPEND ON GENEVA. RABIN GOVERNMENT UNDER PRESSURE IF IT CEDES PASSES AND OIL FIELDS WITHOUT OBTAINING SIGNIFICANT PROGRESS TOWARDS NORMALIZING RELATIONS. HAK ARGUES THAT SADAT BEING VERY FLEXIBLE, CONSIDERING. NEWSMEN ON PLANE TOLD DEADLOCK WOULD RESULT IF NO MAJOR CONCESSION FORTHCOMING. (FRONT PAGE AP PHOTO OF HAK AND SISCO ON PLANE.)

2. WASHPOST -- BERGER ON PAGE 13 LEADS WITH EXTRAORDINARY NATURE OF SABBATH SESSION BY CABINET; ONLY PREVIOUS OCCASION WAS DURING YOM KIPPUR WAR. DECISION TO MEET TAKEN WHEN EGYPTIAN OFFER DETERMINED TO BE INSUFFICIENT, NO NEED TO KEEP HAK IN SUSPENSE OR APPEAR TO BE STALLING. CABINET SEARCHING FOR BASIS TO KEEP TALKS GOING. HAK KNOWN TO BE UNCLASSIFIED

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DISMAYED AT "GLACIAL SLOWNESS" OF MOVEMENT ON BOTH SIDES; GAP IS BEING NARROWED, BUT NOTHING ASSURES IT WILL BE CLOSED. MAIN ISSUE IS WHAT PIECE OF LAND FOR SADAT'S PIECE OF PEACE. MOBILIZATION REPORTED IN ISRAEL AND DENIED BY PERES. HAK REPORTED TO HAVE USED MAPS WITH SADAT, AND TO HAVE WRITTEN STATEMENTS OF OPPOSING POSITIONS. BERGER REFERS TO SAME POINTS AS GWERTZMAN (ABOVE), AS HEARD ON THE PLANE.

3. BALTSUN -- MILLS ON FIRST PAGE SAYS CABINET MET AMID ENCOURAGING SIGNS. SABBATH MEETING UNDERSCORED URGENCY OF TOPIC, BUT NO SOLID DETAILS AS TO DISCUSSION. HAK CITED SAYING HE WAS "NOT PREPARED" TO SAY AN AGREEMENT IS CLOSE. REPORTERS ON PLANE LEFT WITH IMPRESSION THAT "A MORE MODEST AGREEMENT THAN ORIGINALLY ENVISIONED IS NOW UNDER

DISCUSSION." MAJOR POINTS CITED BY BERGER AND GWERTZMAN
REPEATED BY MILLS.

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